The site at Ockham Common is at the edge of a motorway which was nearing completion at the time when I found the beetle. In all probability, the piece of wood was brought to the site in the process of road-way construction. The beetle too may have been transported there although the similarity of the site to that at which I found the species at Elveden (also at the edge of a small pine plantation) and the fact that on both occasions the beetles were found on the underside of a piece of wood lying on sandy ground suggests that the Ockham Common example probably bred locally. J. A. OWEN, 8 Kingsdown Road, Epsom, Surrey KT17 3PU.

CAPTURE OF THE IMAGO OF SYNANTHEDON ANDRENAEFORMIS (LASPEYRES): ORANGE-TAILED CLEARWING. – Baker (in Heath J. ed., 1985. *Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland,* **2**: 369-388.) describes the imago of *S. andrenaeformis* as "except when newly emerged in early morning, seemingly non-existent". This resulted in the species being considered extremely rare before the discovery of the larval foodplant, although it is now known to be widespread across the downland of southern England. On 16th July 1986 I visited Westcott Downs in Surrey looking principally for hoverflies. The day was very hot, and insects seemingly scarce, most flowers being apparantly unattractive. However, on reaching a small group of limes which were in flower, the situation changed. The lime blossoms were alive with insects; hoverflies, bees and even several species of butterfly, and it was then that I netted an insect in flight which was seen to be *S. andrenaeformis.* Whether it was actually attracted to the flowers is open to question, but the site was some distance from the clumps of wayfaring tree where the larvae may be found.

Several other species of clearwing have come my way since I started searching flowers for flies. On 7th June this year I took a specimen of *S. culiciformis* L. which was feeding on flowers of hawthorn on Chobham Common. Last year I found imagines of both *S. myopaeformis* Borkh., and *S. tipuliformis* Clerk at ground elder flowers in my garden.

Other dipterists or hymenopterists must also notice clearwings from time to time, and I would be interested to hear of their records, especially for Surrey. G. A. COLLINS, 15 Hurst Way, Croydon, Surrey.

SCOPARIA AMBIGUALIS (TREITS.) (LEPIDOPTERA: PYRALIDAE) – LARVA FEEDING ON ROOTSTOCK OF VALERIAN. – The early stages of *Scoparia ambigualis* (Treitschke, 1829) appear to be unknown so the following discovery is of interest. While collecting at Binn Wood Quarry, Glen Farg, Perthshire (O.S.Grid Ref. NO/1613; V.C.88) on 31.v.1986, my attention was attracted to a bank of lush vegetation in which one of the plants of valerian

(*Valeriana officinalis* L.) was wilting slightly. The day was bright and sunny but it had rained heavily in the morning. Closer investigation revealed what I took to be a tortricoid larva feeding on the superficial layers at the base of the stem and the upper part of the rootstock. It had excavated a groove extending about one-third of the way into the plant tissue. There was no apparent silk associated with the feeding and the larva would have become detached if the plant had been pulled up. It ceased feeding a few days later and in due course an imago of *Scoparia ambigualis* emerged on 6.vii.1986. Unfortunately a larval description and details of the cocoon were not recorded. Due to the abundance of this species in a wide range of habitats it probably adopts this mode of feeding on many different species of plant. – K. P. BLAND, 35 Charterhall Road, Edinburgh, EH9 3HS.

DEFENCE REACTION IN THE SMALL TORTOISESHELL – During mid-August 1985, at Barlaston Rough Close Common, I was observing an unidentified species of dragonfly hawking along the banks of a large pond. During the period of observation a number of insect prey were seized, including a wall brown (*Lasiommata megera* L.), which was consumed from a perch on a nearby tree. Shortly afterwards, the dragonfly approached a small tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae* L.) This butterfly turned and flew directly at the dragonfly, which promptly broke off the "attack". The dragonfly tried twice more to secure the butterfly, meeting the same response each time. J. KORYSZKO, 3 Dudley Place, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.

LARVAL FOODPLANTS OF ALLOPHYES OXYACANTHAE L. (LEP.: NOCTUIDAE) – In the Highlands of Scotland this species is not uncommon, but the foodplants with which the moth is associated in England are largely absent, these being blackthorn, hawthorn and apple (*Rosaceae*), and for the Highlands G. Harper (*Ent. Rec.* **66**:98) notes birch and sallow, but without indication of the extent to which these plants are utilised. On June 13th, 1986, I found numerous *oxyacanthae* larvae on rowan (*Rosaceae*) at Aviemore and Nethy Bridge, Inverness-shire and at Grantown and Dulnain Bridge, Moray, indicating *Sorbus aucuparia* as a major larval pabulum in the region. – B. K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Bexley, Kent.

DIORYCTRIA SCHUETZEELLA FUCHS (LEP.: PYRALIDAE) IN SUFFOLK – A single specimen of this moth was taken at light at Monks Eleigh, Suffolk, on 7th August 1986. This species was first recorded in England in 1980 (*Ent. Rec.* **94**: 1-3) and as far as I am aware is known only from Orlestone Forest in Kent and Playden in Sussex. – A. WATCHMAN, "Onchan", Black Lane, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk.